

who even refused to adopt his advice as to the proper way in which to return to France, and though he once more became Chief Minister, Talleyrand, like Louis XVIII, owed his restoration in 1815 solely to the Allies.

Next to Talleyrand, at least in the popular belief, came Pouche. Fouche, so long the Police Minister, enjoyed a reputation far above his deserts, as indeed his conduct at this very time shows. In 1814, having been in disgrace since 1810, much to his grief he had been sent to Italy, and found himself unable to get to Paris in time to share in the spoils. During the first Restoration he lived quietly, suspected by both parties, but apparently really inclined to forward the Orléanist cause. The return of Napoleon forced his hand, and an attempt to arrest him, directed by the Bourbons and mismanaged by Bourrienne, threw him on the side of Napoleon. He hedged, however, by foretelling the speedy overthrow of the Empire, and promising to work for the recall of Louis.

Through all the year 1815 Fouche's conduct seems to have been—what his enemies represented it to have always been — a combination of that of knave and fool, the fool in this instance predominating.¹ Strongly suspected by the Bonapartists of giving information to the enemy, he kept his views concealed till he had gained the position of head of the Provisional Government instituted on the Emperor's abdication. At last he had succeeded in placing himself in the position occupied by Talleyrand in 1814, and, like the Irish patriot, no doubt he thanked Heaven that he had a country to sell. He sold it to the least possible advantage for himself or France. Every card he had in his hand he threw away. He forced Napoleon to leave France when his presence might still have prevented the rapid advance of the Allies. He discouraged and sent off the army of some hundred thousand men he had

¹ As before stated, Lucien Bonaparte acquits Fouche of betraying Napoleon during the *Cent Jours*, and says that Napoleon knew of Fouche's secret proposals to Metternich, even those which appeared to be against the Emperor himself (Tang's *History*, tome iii. p. 294). See also Croker's *Correspondence*, vol. ii. p. 236 (Murray, 1884), to show that Fouche wished Napoleon to succeed in escaping.